

THE ECONOMY OF INDO-CHINA

exports, and buys there, in exchange, 39 per cent of her raw materials*. Economic common sense would indicate far greater advantages in selling where it buys. country's

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The Indo-Chinese are the worst sufferers in this arrangement. They are forced to purchase more expensive and — to them — less useful and appropriate articles, long before their taste for European merchandise has been properly developed. It is undeniable that France has benefited far more than her colony from the various tariff regimes.

The recent treaties made with her Far Eastern neighbours are a step towards reintegrating the colony in her natural economic setting. In addition, export taxes have been so reduced as to strike now only materials needed by local industries. The antagonism of the French producer to colonial rivals has forced the administration to temper its economic assimilation. The principle is still intact, and the recent Imperial Conference shows that the goal remains economic self-sufficiency within the French Empire. It took many years for the principle of political association to make any headway. In the economic field, as yet, the only important breach in the otherwise impregnable wall that encircles France and Indo-China is the development of a colonial tariff personality.

PUBLIC WORKS

Many writers on Indo-Chinese economy confuse the colony's economic development with its production. The public works undertaken by the administration, whether they be of direct benefit to the population, like hydraulic agriculture, or of indirect benefit, like developing the means of communication, form Q&ly the mechanical

framework,
cannot serve as a touchstone of the country's
prosperity. An analogous
group of government enterprises which had a retarded*
though not direct,
effect on the country's economy are medical **assistance**
and **educational**
institutions, arising out of the **government's social**
obligations. For
thirty years ML A. Pouyanne has been the directing
spirit behind the
colony's public works programmes,

The Means of

Development of **the** means of communication has **been**,
above all, the
of government **solicitude**. From 1900 to 1930*
6\$0^000,000
have been on public works, of which **6a*** per
for **100,000 bridges**; 19 per cent to